

The Scarecrows on Parade

Author: Shamim Padamsee
Illustrator: Tanaya Vyas

PRATHAM BOOKS
A Book in Every Child's Hand

Level 2



"Please Ma, may I help you make scarecrows?" asked Gauri.
Ma was tying some sticks together to make a scarecrow. She put an old shirt over the sticks, and then stuffed it with hay.



Gauri walked to the clothesline where the washed clothes were drying. She picked up a dress.

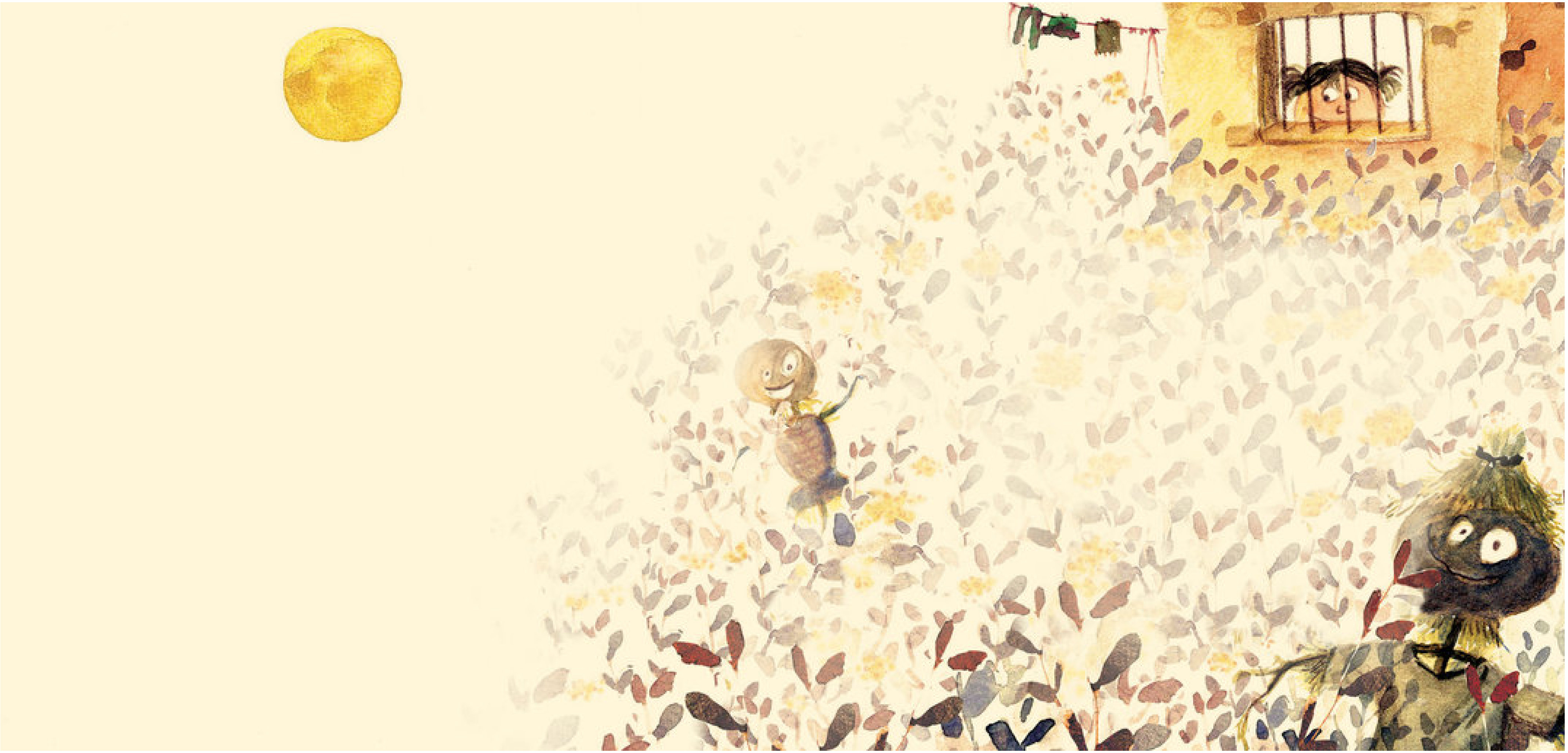
"I will dress her up in my new red frock and tie her hair with red ribbons too! She will look so lovely!"



“You silly girl. You can’t have a pretty scarecrow. Scarecrows have to scare the birds away, and so they must look scary! Like this!” said Mother, making a face and waving her arms.
Gauri giggled. “You look so funny Ma!”



Mother took the scarecrows into the fields and fixed them amidst the tall stalks of grain. "There now, be good scarecrows and chase the birds away," said Gauri, patting them.



Gauri and her mother returned to their hut.
Gauri went inside and lay on her cot.
A big yellow moon was rising, bathing the field in a soft, white glow.



Gauri saw a scarecrow look down at its clothes.

“Why do we always have to wear these tattered old clothes?” said a scarecrow with a sigh. “I wish we had something pretty to wear!”

“Yes, me too!” said another. The scarecrows looked around the field. Suddenly, one of them called out, “Hey, look at those lovely clothes flapping in the breeze. Why don’t we wear those?”

“Oo-oo! These clothes are so pretty. Let us try them on!” said another.



One scarecrow tried on a lovely red dress with sequins on them. It sparkled in the moonlight. She tied the pretty red ribbons that were flapping in the breeze on her straw hair. Thrilled with her new clothes she began to show them off.

Soon, all the scarecrows were busy dressing up! They began to parade. They walked! They turned! They twisted! They twirled!
They tossed their empty mud-pot heads, and smiled their crooked mud-pot smiles.
They were having a wonderful time!



At the same time, hundreds of birds flew down to the fields. Birds here, birds there, birds everywhere. Beaks smacking! Beaks munching! Beaks chomping!
"Mmm! This is delicious!" said one, as she wiped her beak with her wing.



“It is not everyday that we can eat in the fields, without being shooed away by the scarecrows.” The scarecrows heard this and looked around. They were horrified! “Shoo! Be gone!” they shouted at the birds, waving their straw hands wildly, to and fro.



Gauri screamed. Her mother came running."Gauri, Gauri, what is the matter? Wake up!"
"Oh Ma, the birds! They are eating up all the grain."
Her mother held her tight, and said, "Shh, my child! Look at the fields. They are safe! It must be a bad dream."



Gauri looked out.
She saw the scarecrows, standing just where they were placed.





Oh, wait a minute, were they waving to her? She looked closer.
She saw a red ribbon fluttering on a scarecrow's hair. She blinked and looked again. Did the scarecrow just wink at her?

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The Scarecrows on Parade
(English)

Scarecrows are put up in fields to scare away birds and animals. But little Gauri thinks otherwise!

This is a Level 2 book for children who recognize familiar words and can read new words with help.